

## **Hypertension and High Cholesterol**

Because it is a leading risk factor for cardiovascular disease, hypertension is a significant health problem in South Carolina. High blood cholesterol levels can contribute to hypertension. To get an idea of the impact that hypertension has on South Carolinians, the BRFSS asked respondents if they had ever been told their blood pressure or cholesterol levels were high.

### ***Ever Been Told Blood Pressure High***

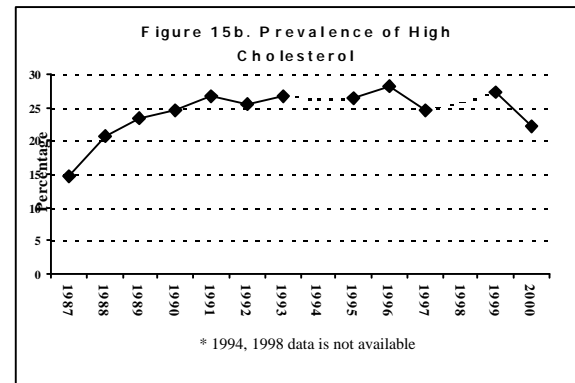
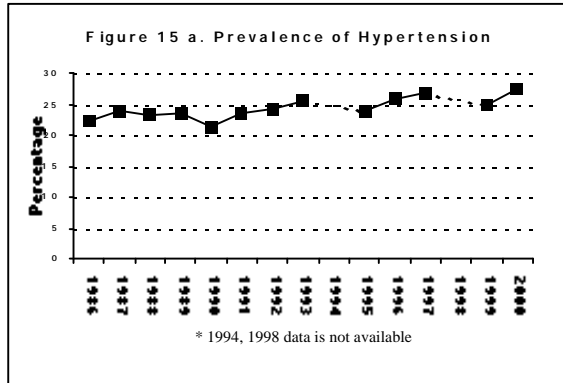
According to the BRFSS, hypertension is a growing problem in South Carolina. The prevalence of high blood pressure has steadily increased from about 22 percent of the population in 1986, to 27.5 percent in 2000. At 34 percent, blacks claimed a significantly higher prevalence of high blood pressure than whites, who reported an overall prevalence of 25.6 percent.

Black females reported the highest prevalence of hypertension. Almost 40 percent of black female BRFSS respondents said that they were told they had high blood pressure, a rate much higher than those of the other three race-sex groups. At 25 percent, white females had the lowest prevalence of hypertension. Black and white males had an almost equal prevalence of hypertension, with about 26 percent of respondents representing either race claiming to have high blood pressure.

### ***Ever Been Told Blood Cholesterol High***

Cholesterol levels among South Carolinians have also been increasing. In 1987, about 15 percent of South Carolinians were told their cholesterol was high. By 2000, 22.3 percent were told they had high cholesterol levels. BRFSS trend data does show, however, that cholesterol levels have decreased since 1996, when about 28 percent of South Carolina adults reported that they had high cholesterol. About 24.3 percent of whites reported that they had been told their cholesterol was high, compared to roughly 18 percent of blacks.

Of the four race-sex groups, white females, at 25 percent, had the highest prevalence of high cholesterol. Conversely, black males reported a prevalence of 15.2 percent, a rate much lower than that of any of the other race sex groups. White male respondents claimed that 23.4 percent had high cholesterol, compared to 20.5 percent of black females.



**Table 15. Prevalence of High Blood Pressure and High Cholesterol, 2000**

	Ever Been Told Blood Pressure High			Ever Been Told Blood Cholesterol High		
	%	95% CI		%	95% CI	
<b>Overall</b>	27.5	25.7	29.3	22.3	20.8	23.9
<b>Sex</b>						
Male	25.8	23.0	28.6	20.9	18.5	23.3
Female	29.0	26.7	31.3	23.7	21.6	25.7
<b>Race</b>						
White	25.6	23.6	27.7	24.3	22.5	26.2
Black	33.8	29.6	38.0	18.2	15.0	21.4
<b>Race and Sex</b>						
White Male	26.3	23.2	29.4	23.4	20.6	26.3
White Female	25.0	22.4	27.6	25.2	22.8	27.6
Black Male	26.0	19.0	33.0	15.2	10.3	20.1
Black Female	39.6	34.6	44.7	20.5	16.3	24.6
<b>Age</b>						
18-24	7.2	4.1	10.3	5.8	3.1	8.5
25-34	12.5	9.2	15.8	9.3	6.9	11.8
35-44	21.9	17.8	26.0	16.0	13.2	18.9
45-54	33.1	28.9	37.3	30.7	26.6	34.8
55-64	44.8	39.5	50.0	40.4	35.2	45.6
65 +	50.0	45.2	54.8	37.2	32.6	41.8
<b>Education</b>						
<High School	42.8	37.2	48.3	23.9	19.5	28.3
HS graduate	26.8	23.9	29.8	24.0	21.2	26.8
Some College	24.2	20.5	27.9	18.7	15.8	21.6
College graduate	23.2	20.1	26.3	23.3	20.2	26.4
<b>House Hold Income</b>						
<\$25,000	34.9	31.1	38.7	21.6	18.5	24.6
\$25,000-\$49,999	21.4	18.8	24.1	21.0	18.4	23.7
\$50,000-\$74,999	22.5	17.3	27.6	20.6	16.5	24.8
\$75,000+	24.3	19.4	29.1	24.9	20.1	29.8
<b>Employment</b>						
Employed	20.6	18.5	22.7	18.7	16.9	20.5
Unemployed	30.2	19.7	40.7	17.7	10.4	25.0
Others	40.4	36.8	44.1	29.4	26.0	32.8
Unable to work	48.6	39.8	57.4	37.4	29.1	45.7